EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Tourism is a major industry in Goa and attracts domestic tourists from other states of the country and foreign tourists from all over the world for a glimpse into the complex heritage and natural beauty of this unique and all-time favorite tourist destination in India. This thesis concentrates on the state of Goa as the research location in an attempt to understand tourism, its evolution and growth, its impacts on the host community and the environment, the needs of its visitors, the perceptions, attitudes and motivations of its various stakeholders and to evaluate all of this in terms of tourism’s costs and benefits, using various appropriate techniques, so as to promote sustainable tourism development in the state.

This research considered the study of tourism’s sustainability from the point of view of its stakeholders and is divided into 7 chapters of which Chapters 3, 4, 5 & 6 cover the four (4) objectives framed, while Chapter 1 is the introductory chapter and Chapter 7 reflects the findings and conclusions of the study. The aim of Chapter 2 was to review relevant literature related to the various objectives of the study and in turn, to identify the research gap viz. the Tourists’ perception about the infrastructure and facilities for tourism in the state, the Residents’ perception about the impact of tourism in the state and its influence on their attitude towards additional tourism and support for tourism, multi-stakeholder perception about the sustainability of tourism in the state and consequently to determine the possibility of suggesting a model for achieving sustainable tourism in the state. The aim of Chapter 3 was to examine the perceptions of tourists visiting the state of Goa with regard to the importance given to and the satisfaction level with respect to the infrastructure, facilities, services and amenities available for tourism and
to identify infrastructural strengths as well as problem areas which will enable various stakeholders to take appropriate measures to improve/enhance the same. In order to strategically utilize resources to minimize the negative impacts of tourism and increase the social support for tourism development. Chapter 4 examined perceptions of the residents in the state of Goa by using the model developed by Perdue et al. (1990); later extended by Mc Gehee, et al. (2002) and based on the social exchange theory; tried to determine whether personal characteristics and personal benefits from tourism influence perception of tourism as well as support for tourism development, and what factors influence support for tourism development and management. The state of Goa is a well known and popular mass tourism destination and increased awareness about the ill-effects of mass tourism coupled with the economic necessity of encouraging tourism growth, has fuelled stakeholder interest towards sustainable tourism. The practice of sustainability in tourism can take diverse paths as evidenced in tourism research, but recently debate is on collaboration and involvement among tourism stakeholders is gaining importance as a key to sustainable tourism development. Chapter 5 investigates the perceptions about various dimensions of sustainable tourism among four groups of tourism stakeholder’s; viz.; Residents, Tourists, Entrepreneurs and Government Officials. The vital role that stakeholders play in the development and promotion of sustainable tourism in a destination cannot be overemphasized, yet there seems to be very little concerted involvement by them, in the planning and management of sustainable tourism development of the destination as well as limited research carried out in this regard so far. Chapter 6 aims at bridging this gap by assessing multi-stakeholder perceptions about various aspects about the sustainability of tourism in Goa in an attempt to predict the direction and consequently the strength of their support for the same. In terms of the
data analysis tools used; Chapter 3 rated the importance given to and the satisfaction level of tourists through a structured questionnaire administered to them and used Importance-Performance Analysis and Gap Analysis used to determine the gap between tourist perception of importance given before trip and satisfaction level after trip; paired t-test to determine if the gap was significant. Variables were plotted on four and two quadrant grids to determine their status in terms of investment and improvement required. Chapter 4 used Regression Analysis to determine whether residents perception of tourism impacts was influenced by personal characteristics and personal benefit derived from tourism and if these perceptions influenced support for tourism development and predicted tourism planning. Chapter 5 attempted to discover if differences existed with regard to stakeholder perceptions about tourism’s sustainability with respect to all four stakeholder groups. An ANOVA test was conducted for each dimension, followed by a Scheffes’ Post Hoc test to determine which groups differed. Finally, using Structural Equation Modeling, Chapter 6 attempted to develop a model/path design which would help to make tourism in the destination sustainable.

Research Findings of Chapter 3 reveal that in 30 out of 34 variables, there is a significant difference in tourist perception before and after the trip. Further, when plotted on an Importance-Performance Grid, a significant number of variables fall in Quadrant II (Concentrate here) indicating an urgent need to focus efforts and resources to improve the same (D’Mello et al, 2015 and 2016). The results of Chapter 4 indicated that in general, while personal characteristics were not good predictors of resident’s attitude towards tourism impacts, Personal benefits from tourism predicted positive impacts of tourism, support for additional tourism and also support for tourism planning. Further, Personal benefits from tourism and the impacts of
tourism predicted support for additional tourism which in turn predicted support for tourism planning thus supporting the social exchange theory (D’Mello et al, 2014, 2015a and 2015b). Results of Chapter 5 result showed that statistically significant differences exists in perception among the four stakeholder groups i.e. tourists, residents, entrepreneurs & government officials for six out of the seven dimensions of sustainability studied (D’Mello et al, 2015). Finally, findings of Chapter 6 indicate that while stakeholder perception about sustainable tourism management, its focus and attitude towards sustainable tourism share a high, positive association with sustainable tourism, understanding of sustainability, its economics and the tourism industry and sustainability are positively associated to a moderate extent only (D’Mello et al, 2015). However, actual participation in sustainable tourism efforts does not share a significant relationship with sustainable tourism. The study concludes by drawing the attention of destination managers, tourism planners and all involved in tourism to the importance of stakeholder awareness, education, participation and involvement for the sustainability of tourism in any destination.